

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 4133

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SU
SUBJECT: UNCHARACTERISTIC EDITORIAL

1. LATEST ISSUE OF MONTHLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE MAGAZINE SUDANOW
CONTAINS EDITORIAL SIGNED BY EDITOR AND MININFO BONA MAL-
WAL RING TITLED UNCHARACTERISTIC ANNOUNCEMENTS. EDITORIAL
IS UNCHARACTERISTIC, TO SAY THE LEAST, SINCE IT CONTAINS
RATHER STRONG CRITICISM OF SADEQ AL-MAHDI AND THINLY
VEILED CRITICISM OF NIMEIRI AS WELL.
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2. ARTICLE BEGINS BE REFERRING TO LATE JULY PRESS CONFERENCE
BY SADEQ WHICH WAS BROADCAST AND TELECAST NATIONWIDE. SADEQ
ANNOUNCED THAT HE AND NIMEIRI HAD AGREED TO FREE ELECTIONS
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WITHIN SSU. EDITORIAL CLAIMS THAT IF THIS TRUE IT WOULD
AMOUNT TO DE FACTO DISSOLUTION OF SSU. BONA MALWAL AVOIDS
DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANCE SADEQ'S ANNOUNCEMENTS, BUT HE WRITES
THAT ANNOUNCEMENTS OF SUCH IMPORTANCE SHOULD BE MADE
BY NIMEIRI.

3. BONA MALWAL THEN GOES ON TO SAY THERE HAS BEEN COM-

PLAINT WITHIN MACHINERY OF MAY REVOLUTION THAT PERSON-ALIZED NATURE OF SADEQ-NIMEIRI CONTACTS REGARDING RECONCILIATION HAVE GIVEN SADEQ ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION THAT MAY REVOLUTION WAS ONLY JAAFAR MUHAMEN NIMEIRI. HE HASTENS TO ADD THAT RECONCILIATION BROADLY SUPPORTED WITHIN MAY REVOLUTION AS MEANS OF BRINGING NATION TOGETHER TO FIGHT WAR ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, RECONCILIATION SHOULD HAVE BEEN HANDLED LIKE ADDIS ACCORD ENDING CIVIL WAR IN SOUTH. THAT IS, REPRESENTATIVES OF TWO LEADERS SHOULD HAVE MET AND THRASHED OUT AGREEMENT. THEN AGREEMENT IN TOTO SHOULD HAVE BEEN RELEASED TO PUBLIC ALL AT ONCE AND NOT ITEM BY ITEM. BONA MALWAL SAYS THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS IN PUBLIC MIND ABOUT WHAT EXACTLY HAS BEEN AGREED UPON. CLAIMING THAT NIMEIRI AND SUDANGOV HAVE FOLLOWED FULL LETTER AND SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION HE CHARGES SADEQ IS INDIVIDUAL WHOSE WORD HAS TURNED OUT AT TIMES NOT TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE. THAT IS, HE HAS FAILED TO BRING ALL DISSIDENTS ALONG.

4. BONA MALWAL PROVIDES APOLOGIA FOR NIMEIRI ACTING WITH SECRECY IN NEGOTIATING WITH SADEQ LAST YEAR. HOWEVER, NOW THAT SADEQ HAS TAKEN SSU OATH, HOPEFULLY PROBLEMS WILL HAVE PASSED AND SADEQ AND HIS GROUP WILL BE ABLE TO PLAY QUOTE FULLER AND MORE HONEST UNQUOTE ROLE IN MAY REVOLUTION. EDITORIAL ENDS WITH PLEA TO BOTH SADEQ AND NIMEIRI TO MAKE PUBLIC WHAT WAS AGREED AT PORT SUDAN LAST YEAR.
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5. COMMENT: HARD TO SAY WHETHER NIMEIRI WAS AWARE OF BONA MALWAL EDITORIAL TEXT PRIOR TO PUBLICATION. WE THINK PROBABLY NOT. ALTHOUGH MALWAL, PARTICULARLY IN SUDANOW, HAS DEVELOPED SOMETHING OF REPUTATION FOR BEING PREPARED TO CRITICIZE SUDANGOV WHILE REMAINING MEMBER OF CABINET AND SSU POLITBURO, RELATIVELY OUTSPOKEN CRITICISM OF SADEQ AND NIMEIRI HIMSELF ALMOST UNHEARD OF HERE. FACT THAT EDITORIAL WAS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE MAGAZINE RATHER THAN ARAB LANGUAGE MEDIA MAY CONCEIVABLY MEAN THAT IT WILL ESCAPE UNNOTICED, BUT THAT SEEMS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE. REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THERE WILL BE ANY PUBLIC REACTION BY EITHER SADEQ OR NIMEIRI, VIEWS EXPRESSED BY BONA MALWAL HAVE BEEN HEARD IN PRIVATE AND ARE WIDELY IF NOT UNIVERSALLY SHARED. AS MOST IMPORTANT SOUTHERNER IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO CENSURE BONA MALWAL WITHOUT CAUSING OTHER PROBLEMS. BONA MALWAL HAS BEEN RUMORED TO BE WANTING RESIGN, BUT UNTIL NOW HE HAS REMAINED IN GOVERNMENT AND SSU HIERARCHY. SO MININFO MAY HAVE GOTTEN HIMSELF IN TROUBLE BOTH WITH SADEQ AND NIMEIRI, BUT HE HAS RAISED ISSUES THAT TROUBLE MANY SUDANESE INCLUD-

ING THOSE IN SSU. WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW DEBATE PROCEEDS
IF AT ALL AND WHETHER, IN PROCESS, BONA MALWAL RETAINS HIS
SENIOR GOVERNMENT AND PARTY POSTS.
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